Pat Nixon Appointment To Council Was Illegal

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SAN CLEMENTE, Jan. 1, (AP)—President Nixon's appointment of his wife to serve on a national advisory council was illegal, the Western White House said today.

A presidential spokesman said the law prohibits the President from appointing a relative to a government position, and therefore Mrs. Nixon cannot serve on the new 25-member National Voluntary Service Advisory Council.

In announcing the appointment Sunday, the White House said the First Lady had been designated by Mr. Nixon as temporary chairwoman of the council. She was to have been eligible for a regular government consultant fee of $138.43 for each day worked at council duties.

The White House statement released today did not explain how the mistake was made or how it was discovered.

The council was established under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, passed last October. Its purpose is to advise the director of Action, the umbrella agency for federal social service organizations.

The council's job includes reviewing the effectiveness of the Peace Corps and domestic voluntary service programs, including Vista.

With Mrs. Nixon now ineligible, the President designated Frank D. Stella of Detroit to serve as temporary chairman until the council meets to elect a permanent chairman. Stella was one of the members announced Sunday.

To fill the vacancy created by the error, Mr. Nixon apointed Henry J. Osinski of Buffalo, N.Y., to the council.

Action director Michael P. Balzano, who originally recommended Mrs. Nixon, will ask the council to elect her honorary chairman.